

**SUMMARY OF THE
PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE TELECONFERENCE
SEPTEMBER 22, 1998**

The Proficiency Testing Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on Tuesday, September 22, 1998, at 1 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). The meeting was led by Mr. Matt Caruso of the New York State Department of Health, sitting in for the chair, Ms. Anne Rhyne. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B.

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Caruso began the meeting by announcing that Ms. Cindy Nettrour and Ms. Michelle Kropilak have officially joined the Proficiency Testing Committee.

SCHEDULING FOR PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEETING

Ms. Rhyne is in the process of planning a 1½ or 2-day face-to-face meeting for the Proficiency Testing Committee. The suggested dates are the last two weeks in October to the first week in November. Committee members are asked to communicate their preferences to Ms. Rhyne by September 25, 1998. The meeting location has not yet been determined. Venue suggestions are also requested.

The purpose of the committee meeting will be to get ready for the Interim meeting. The committee will review and discuss changes to Chapter 2 and its appendices per comments received and per conference call action items. The committee will also discuss new appendices as available: Air, Radiochemistry, and Environmental Toxicology.

Environmental Monitoring Management Council (EMMC) Update

Ms. Lara Autry provided the committee with preliminary comments from the recent EMMC meeting in Washington, D.C. She said that right now, the feeling is that comments from EMMC will have little effect on Chapter 2. Most of the comments relate to Chapter 5.

Ms. Autry mentioned one specific comment brought up during the meeting. She said that there is inconsistency in wording between Chapter 2 and the rest of the NELAC Standards. Chapter 2 uses the phrase “program matrix analyte” while other chapters use the phrase “program method analyte.” The phrasing in Chapter 2 seems to be acceptable, and the other chapters will probably be asked to change.

Comments on Chapter 2

The only comments received so far are from Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Board (ELAB). Ms. Rhyne will distribute these to the committee. Ms. Darlene Raiford said that she has been gathering comments on Chapter 2 and will probably have them ready the first week in October.

Regression Equation Subcommittee (Caruso, Coyner, Wibby)

The subcommittee is being chaired by Mr. Tom Coyner. Preliminary work has begun to determine if the statistical methods used by providers to address outlying results are essentially equivalent. If these statistical methods are equivalent, calculating regression equations should go quickly. NELAC had asked for a placeholder for method codes, which will be provided by the committee.

From the list of analytes to be added, Mr. Graves noted that some do not look reasonable. As an example, some water pollution (WP) analytes were added to the water supply (WS) studies, and some WS analytes were added to the WP studies. Mr. Chuck Wibby and Mr. Graves will resolve this issue.

Environmental Toxicology

Mr. Graves said that a new draft of National Standards should be available on September 25, 1998. He also mentioned that he would like to set up a meeting to discuss the whole effluent toxicity (WET) methodology. Dr. Faust Parker said that there is already a subcommittee which consists of nine people. Some of the people Mr. Graves wanted to participate in the discussions are already members of this subcommittee. The group plans to hold their first conference call the first week in October. Dr. Parker said that sediment and soils toxicity may have to be put on hold for now. Both Dr. Parker and Mr. Graves agreed that the first priority should be water and whole effluent toxicity.

Discharge Monitoring Recharge Quality Assurance (DMRQA) Program

Mr. Graves was asked about the status of the DMRQA issues. He responded that he had spoken to Ms. Rhyne and intends to send her email after he looks into the subject. He said that the permittee still has to fill out two report forms. However, two questions still remain: Does the permittee have the right to look at data before it is submitted? And if a laboratory passes the proficiency testing (PT) requirements for NELAC, has it also satisfied the DMRQA requirement? Mr. Graves said that no rulings have been made yet. The federal government cannot require a permittee to do their work using a WP-certified laboratory. However, he is unsure whether the converse is true. This is a policy issue.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Membership and Outreach Committee is putting together a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to post on the NELAC Web site. Ms. Barbara Burmeister is organizing the FAQs for the PT Committee. Mr. Caruso and Mr. Wibby volunteered to participate in a subcommittee to develop FAQs. Two items to consider are the PT frequency issue and the DMRQA requirements.

ACTION ITEMS
PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 22, 1998

Item No.	Action Item	Date To Be Completed
1.	Develop FAQs for the NELAC Web site.	mid-October
2.	Communicate time/location preferences to Ms. Rhyne for the PT Committee's face-to-face meeting.	September 25, 1998

PARTICIPANTS
PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 22, 1998

Name	Affiliation	Phone/Fax/E-mail
Ms. Anne Rhyne, Chair (absent)	TX Natural Resrc. Conserv. Comm.	T: 512-239-1291 F: 512-239-2550 E: arhyne@tnrcc.state.tx.us
Ms. Lara Autry	U.S. EPA, Emission Measurement Center	T: 919-541-5544 F: 919-541-1039 E: autry.lara@epamail.epa.gov
Ms. Barbara Burmeister	Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene	T: 608-833-1770, ext. 107 F: 608-833-1019 E: burmie@mail.slh.wisc.edu
Mr. Matt Caruso	NY State Dept. of Health	T: 518-485-5570 F: 518-485-5568 E: caruso@wadsworth.org
Mr. Tom Coyner	Analytical Products Group	T: 614-423-4200 F: 614-423-5588 E: apg@citynet.net
Ms. Betsy Dutrow (liaison) (absent)	U.S. EPA, Office of Research and Development	T: 202-564 - 9061 F: 202-565 - 2441 E: dutrow.elizabeth@epamail.epa.gov
Mr. Edward Glick (invited guest)	U.S. EPA, Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water	T: 513-569-7939 F: 513-569-7191 E: glick.edward@epamail.epa.gov
Mr. Robert Graves (invited guest)	U.S. EPA, Office of Research and Development	T: 513-569-7197 F: 513-569-7115 E: graves.bob@epamail.epa.gov
Ms. Cindy Nettletrou (absent)	American Waterworks	T: 618-239-0516 F: 618-235-6349 E: cnette@bellevillelab.com
Ms. Michele Kropilak	NJDEP, Office of Quality Assurance	T: 609-984-7732 F: 609-777-1774 E: mkropilak@dep.state.nj.us
Dr. Faust Parker	Espey, Huston, & Assoc., Inc.	T: 713-977-1500 F: 713-977-9233 E: fausteha@wt.net
Ms. Darlene Raiford	Hampton Roads Sanitation District	T: 757-460-4217 F: 757-460-6586 E: draiford@hrs.dst.va.us
Mr. Chuck Wibby	Env. Resource Associates	T: 303-431-8454 F: 303-421-0159 E: qcstds@aol.com
Ms. Jenny Lloyd (contractor support)	Research Triangle Institute	T: 919-541-5942 F: 919-541-5929 E: jml@rti.org